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# Moral Outlook as seen in Roman Fable

# MORAL OUTLOOK AS SEEN IN ROMAN FABLE, PROVERB AND MAXIM

BY

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY Angie Aleta Smith

ENTITLED Moral Outlook as seen in Roman Fable, Proverb and Maxim

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MORAL OUTLOOK AS SEEN IN ROMAN FABLE, PROVERB, AND MAXIM.

## I. INTRODUCTION

There are two ways in which men reveal the truth about themselves - the one hidden and mysterious, the other open and simple.[1] It is my purpose to show that the ancients were moved by the first. Thus their ideas concerning morals are revealed in fables, proverbs, and maxims. In order to show in what manner this is done, it is necessary to consider the origin and meaning of these forms of folk literature. When one searches attentively for the principle of that passion which the ancients had for allegory and fiction, he finds that it has its source in their great knowledge of the human heart.[2]

The fable may be defined as a narrative in which beings, irrational and sometimes inanimate are, for the purpose of moral instruction, feigned to act and speak with human interests and passions.[3] A good early definition of the fable is the following: "Fabula est oratio ficta, verisimili dispositione imaginem exhibens veritatis."[4] The object of the fable will be only imperfectly attained if the moral sense is presented directly to the thought.[5] A direct teaching does not strike the imagination with sufficient potency to remain in the memory. It is necessary for the intelligence to find the signifi-

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1 De Méry, M. C. : Histoire Générale des Proverbes, Vol. I. Paris 1828

2 De Méry : l. c.

3 Fable: Storr, F., Encyclopedia Britannica. 11th edition.

4 Priscianus, translation from the Greek - Aphthonius, in Aesopi Phrygis vita et fabellae, p. 254, ed. de Froben, Bâle, 1517.

5 Du Meril: Poésies Inédites, p. 7, Paris 1854.

cance of the fable and the pleasure of this discovery brings into bolder relief the feeling of its usefulness. Men have a natural aversion to recognizing the truth, especially when it strikes them most acutely in regard to self-love, hidden secrets and passions. The ancients regarded men as grown-up children, who had a natural taste for fables.[6] One cannot blame them for being attached to a preference for that allegorical manner of making truth and morals pleasant. Nothing serves better to reveal the inner curiosity of man than mystery, hence, in order to excite in him the greatest desire of solving the mystery it is better not to let him see precisely where a thing is hidden.[7] The mysterious veil under which the ancients covered their teaching prompted them to look for truth where they would not have looked if everything had been plain and open before them.

The fable does not, under changing conditions, remain a simple allegory, borrowed from beings of an inferior nature; it becomes also a positive lesson given in the name of experience to each of its hearers.[8] It is not derived from some precept taken by hazard from the circumstances and caprices of the moment, which exercise no immediate influence, but a chapter from a body of doctrines and from the motive of an action. It acquires a very superior importance, since it is no longer an open lesson without reason or apparent object, but is necessary counsel. Although it is indifferent in itself, it receives something piquant and of veritable interest from the circumstances which produced it.[9]

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6 De Méry, M. C. - l. c.
7 De Méry, M. C. - op. cit. p. 2.
8 Du Meril - op. cit. p. 8.
9 Du Meril - op. cit. p. 9.

Nearly every nation has evolved out of its folk lore, some form of beast fable and in certain instances these stories have been developed into a means of distilling the simple morals of a people yet in the nursery of civilization.[10] What more can be said in honor of this symbolical way of moralizing than that the wisdom of the ancients, and their precepts, counsels and admonitions for the ordering of our lives and manners have been handed down to us from all antiquity under the form of innuendos and allusions?[11] In fables is to be found an inexhaustible source of documents in regard to the opinions, beliefs, customs, manners, and inner history of the peoples among whom they have arisen. They have transmitted to us by tradition the distinctive character of certain peoples of antiquity. They display not only a fine knowledge of the human heart, but they offer useful hints on many important points, as on the choice of companions, bringing up of children, bearing of prosperity and adversity, restraint of immoderate desires. No student of humanity can afford to neglect or pass them by.[12]

The history of the fable goes back to remotest antiquity. It has its origin in the universal impulse of men to express their thoughts in concrete images. The man of ancient times recognizes in all animals a similarity to himself. He attaches certain ideas to each animal which he has of necessity observed, and those by which he has been more vividly impressed exercise a dominating influence on the forms of his thought and the nature of his language.[13] He designates by the name of the animal those men who possess to a high

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[10] Home Gordon: Preface - Aesop's Fables: p. V, London 1912

[11] Sir Roger L'Estrange: Fables of Aesop, Preface. p. 4, London 1724.

[12] Trench, R. C.- Proverbs and their Lessons, p. 7. London 1869.

[13] Du Meril : op. cit., introduction, p. 1.

degree the qualities which seem to him to characterize the species. He adorns his weapons with the image of animals and birds whose rapidity or strength he envies. In his naive symbolism he attributes a real significance to a simple representation and believes thus to chill the ardor of his enemies and increase the confidence of his companions. Primitive people often thought of their gods in the form of animals and some authorities trace the origin of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls to those very circumstances from which the earliest fables arise. It is to those animals by which man is surrounded that he makes the most common comparisons, not only to express his hatred, but also his admiration. The Greeks compare Achilles to a lion; the Trojans advance to battle with great cries like flocks of cranes; the heavens are peopled with constellations bearing names of animals, and there are still seven of them among the signs of the Zodiac. One of our most natural tendencies is to speak of our favorite occupations. Poverty of knowledge and ideas forced primitive peoples to choose for ordinary subjects of conversation the customs and peculiarities of animals, even when these were not pleasing to them. If animals in many such ways speak to people, it is only a step further to put words into their mouths. Tradition and poetic art have at least given animals a history, have brought them into conditions which are similar to those of men, have made them think in a human way, have made them speak and act after the characteristic manner which an animal possesses by nature.[14] The fable becomes more instructive when the personages are well known to us and when they find themselves sufficiently mingled in our habitual life to interest us in their destiny. Fables are directed to our practical sense. They do not pretend to do anything more elevated than to show us by a sensible example the expediency of a certain rule of prudence. The primitive fable, that which

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[14] Kerler, H. J. - Römische Fabeluichter, p. 7. Stuttgart 1838.

finds itself at least in an elementary state in all beginning civilizations is thus only an allegory, expressing by a little action familiar to all a practical idea of common wisdom.[15]

The events of the times in which Phaedrus, the greatest of the Roman fabulists, lived suggested the moral and prudential lessons which his fables inculcated. The bane of Rome under the empire was the public informer. Life and conduct, private as well as public, were exposed to a complete system of espionage. No one was safe from this formidable inquisition; a man's familiar associate might be in secret his bitterest enemy.[16] The principal victims were the rich. They were marked out for destruction, in order that the confiscation of their property might glut the avarice of the Emperor and the informers. For this reason, Phaedrus often makes the comparative safety of obscurity and poverty form the moral of his fables. He wished without pointing out anyone to struggle against a moral degradation, which every day became greater. In entering into this view he tried to suppress its perils and, as he himself declares, he had been thus led to have recourse to the best kind of literature to preserve the moralist from slanderous accusations.[17] It was not his purpose to point out particular cases, but to show life itself and the customs of man.[18] All his works show with what care he had studied men and affairs. Thus it is possible for us to gain from the teachings of his fables, an idea of the moral outlook of a Roman at that time.

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15 Du Meril: op. cit. 6,

16 Browne, R. W. - History of Roman Classical Literature, p. 413.

17 Hervieux, L - Les Fabulistes Latins, Vol. I, p. 15. Paris 1893.

18 Fables of Phaedrus, Prologue Book I, Book II.

A proverb may be defined as a form of folk literature expressing in the form of a simple, homely sentence, a pungent criticism of life.[19] There is a close affinity between the fable and the proverb. In some languages the same word is used with both meanings.[20] The relation between them has always been vaguely understood. Of course many proverbs referring to animal life were derived from extant fables, but for many an independent origin is very possible.

Proverbs, as nothing else, furnish an insight into the inmost thought and life of a people.[21] They are the children of time and experience; the results of observations general and varied on moral causes and their effects. They are particularly useful in the discovery of the history of the human race, for as a rule, they have a better knowledge of the customs of the people than the false abstractions of philosophers and the sophisms of certain writers.

It is possible to learn from the proverbs current among a people what is nearest to their hearts, the aspects under which they contemplate life, in what ways honor and dishonor are distributed among them, what is of good, what is of evil report in their eyes, - all this with very much more which it is of advantage to know.[22] In the same manner it is possible to discover the genius, wit, and spirit of a nation. They contain allusions or comprise opinions and thoughts upon peculiar conditions, state and private af-

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[19] Proverb, Encyclopedia Britannica - 11th edition.

[20] Hausrath: Fabel, Pauly - Wissowa: Real Encyclopedia, Vol VI 2, p. 1704 Stuttgart 1909.

[21] Handschin, Chas. Hart - Das Sprichwort bei Hans Sachs, p. 6, Madison, Wis., 1904.

[22] Trench, R. C. - op. cit. p. 54

fairs, personalities and occurrences, which for a definite people are known as characteristic. While the poetical element of popular speech is manifested in the proverb, the philosophy of the common people, the "wisdom of the streets" is found in the truest as well as the most original proverbs.[23] A nation will occasionally in its proverbs indulge in a vein of satire upon itself and show that it is aware of its own follies, faults, and weaknesses. Since proverbs are a genuine transcript of what is stirring in the hearts of men, and since therein exist cowardice, untruth, selfishness, unholiness, profaneness, how could these be wanting in proverbs?[24] But the glory of proverbs is their common sense, the practical wisdom for the ordering of our own lives, or the management of our relations with others, contained in many of them.[25] In fact, proverbs, with their wise hints, counsels, and warnings, have a part in all phases of practical life.

The way in which proverbs arise and develop is not always evident. For the most part they are extremely ancient and their origin goes back to a time in which a permanent literature did not survive.[26] It is generally conceded that the proverb has its origin in the universal impulse of men to express their thoughts in concrete images. For instance, some event has laid strongly hold of their imagination, has stored up the depths of their moral consciousness, and all that they have then felt they have gathered up for

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23 Otto: Sprichwörter der Romer, p. XI, Leipzig 1890

24 Trench, R. C. - op. cit. p. 124

25 Trench, R. C. op. cit. p. 100

26 Otto: op. cit. p. XIX

themselves, perhaps in some striking phrase which was uttered at the moment, or, it maybe, in some allusive words, understood by everybody, which at once call up the whole incident before their eyes. The main sources of the Latin proverbs are the literary monuments.[27] Authors vary in their use according to the subject. Comedy has the greatest number, particularly Plautus and Terence. Satire is a close second, with its realistic picture of life. The works of Horace, Persius, Martial, Juvenal, and above all, Varro, Seneca and Petronius, abound in proverbs. Personal letters, philosophical writings (particularly those of Cicero), and the records of the church fathers furnish many more. The more exalted styles of writing such as epic and lyric poetry, contain few proverbs, but almost every Roman author has contributed to the collection.[28]

The material from which proverbs are drawn is extremely varied. All sides of human life and all nature surrounding us have been utilized in a way. The allusions to nature include not only animal life, but flowers, trees, grains, the wind, the weather, the sun and the stars.[29] Upon family life and the mutual relationships of the members of the family, the proverb throws significant rays of light. However, characteristic Roman traits are not always delightful, for cordiality and sincerity often seem to be lacking. As a rule, the worst characteristics of women are set forth in Roman proverbs. However, the two poles about which the life of the Romans turned were country life and war. There were few political proverbs. The currents of higher politics in Rome were too far away from the ordinary man to furnish him with material for

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27 Otto - op. cit. XXXIV

28 Otto - op. cit. XXXV

29 Otto - op. cit. XXIV

real proverbs. What few the commons have contain a practical legal character, the finer texture or improvement of which is due to the Romans. The Roman delight in public and private plays, in the theater, circus, and gladiatorial combats is evident in the proverb. On the other hand, skill and learning remain, as far as they do not serve the practical need, foreign to the Roman. Some of their proverbial expressions refer to the unsettled condition of the world at that time; others to current superstitions. History furnishes some material, but geography is less important for this purpose. In short the proverbs of a nation are the great book out of which it is easy to read its character.[30]

The customs of the Romans varied following the diversity of the times.[31] Under their first kings they lived in great simplicity. Their whole existence was divided between the need of getting food and the peril of war. Under the consuls they were often the prey of cruel dissensions. On the one side the desire of domination among the patricians, and on the other the love of independence among the plebeians, excited by the turbulent spirit of the tribunes, brought about the dangerous factions.[32] Finally the Roman people became masters of the world. In the first centuries of the republic, agriculture was in great honor among the Romans. It was the love of work and of country life, during so many centuries, kept up those sentiments of generosity which carried high the name of the Roman people in its conquests and victories. The principal object of the virtue of the Romans was the prosperity of the state.[33] They knew little of the pleasing virtues of charity and compassion.

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30 Paxton Hood - Scottish Characteristics, p. 171, London 1883.

31 De Méry: op. cit. 125

32 De Méry: op. cit. p. 126

33 De Méry: op. cit. p. 127

What could one expect of a people who caused unfortunate prisoners to be eaten in the arena, who exposed infant children to death, and who sold old slaves as so much useless property.?[34] The Romans of these later times were influenced by orgies, bacchanals, superstitions and the worship of gods, who were protectors of crime. However, as a whole, their proverbs are business-like, practical, frugal, and severe.

The maxim may be defined as a brief statement of practical principle, derived from experience, accepted as true and acted on as a rule or guide. The maxim is closely related to the proverb, but it is possible to make some difference between the real proverbs in which the substitution of a general idea through a particular one is essential and the partly popular, partly practical, partly ethical maxims which are sometimes considered as figurative proverbs. The most important collection of Roman maxims is that of Syrus.[35] This collection embraces about 1000 verses, is not grounded upon philosophic system, but comes from experience, and therefore possesses a rich treasure of worldly wisdom. These maxims are marked particularly by wit, neatness and shrewdness. The chief charm of this species of literature was probably due to an accurate knowledge of human nature exhibited in pointed and terse language.

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[34] De Méry: op. cit. p. 132.

[35] "Publilius Syrus Mimi Sententiae." Woelfilin ed.

## II. ROMAN FABULISTS

Among the Romans, the celebrated fable of Menenius Agrippa, which deals with the stomach and the other parts of the body, is the oldest known.[1] There are proofs of the Aesopic fable in the satires of Ennius.[2] Lucilius also made use of the fable, although in a very limited way. The fable, as Horace makes use of it, is both mirthfully didactic and familiarly personal. He makes the humor of the fable, a means to an ethical end. The importance of the fable in his satire is shown in the variety of themes with which it deals; hypocrisy, fickleness, greed, integrity, false emulation, and the relation of luxury to happiness.[3]

Phaedrus stands at the head of Roman fable writers. He was born in the mountainous district of Pieria, in Thrace.[4] He later removed to Italy, at what time it is not known, although he must have been very young. Authorities disagree as to the facts of his life, because the only evidences they have from which to draw are his collections of fables.[5] He was a slave of Augustus, but was later manumitted, probably because Augustus recognized in him an exceptional intelligence.[6] He encountered the wrath of Sejanus through the allusions in some of his fables.[7] He was condemned but it is not

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1 Livy 2, 22

2 Gellius, N. A. II 29

3 Archibald H.T. - The Fable in Archilochus, Herodotus, Livy, and Horce, Am. Phil. Assoc. Vol. 23, p. LXXXIX.

4 Fables of Phaedrus, Prologue, Book III

5 Schanz: Römische Literaturgeschichte, Vol. VIII 2, p. 39, Munich 1898.

6 Hervieux; op. cit. 14.

7 Plessis Frederic: La Poésie Latine, p. 484, Paris 1909.

known in what way he was punished although it seems that he had to leave Rome. We know nothing about the time or the circumstances of his death. Most of the material of his fables was taken from the Greek Aesop; but for some we have no definite source. Many authorities think that our Phaedrus collection of fables is only a part of a much larger collection.[8] Phaedrus was a just and exact observer. We find him a stranger to the public life of his time, but of independent spirit. As with most moralists, overcome by sadness, he turned to criticism.[9] However, he himself says that in making himself a fabulist he has not acted under the influence of any personal animosity, but that he has been guided by the unique desire of pointing out and curing the moral faults of humanity.[10] His fables are simple in style, portraying the pathetic, the comic, the concise, and the sarcastic.

Next in importance to Phaedrus is Avianus. The circumstances of his life are buried in obscurity. The forty-two fables, which he wrote in elegaic metre and dedicated to a certain Theodosius, seem to belong to a later time, probably to the fourth century.[11] Some of his subjects seem to have been taken from the Greek fable-writer, Babrius.[12] At least, in his preface he admits that he has taken his model from the Greeks.[13]

The Romulus collection of fables, dating at the latest from the tenth century, formed in the Middle Ages the nucleus for a number of

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8 Schanz. l. c.

9 Plessis: op. cit. p. 494.

10 Phaedrus: Prologue, Book III.

11 Kerler: op. cit. 51.

12 Teuffel - Schwabe: Hist. of Rom. Lit. Vol. I. p. 34, Leipzig, 1890

13 Kerler: l. c.

other collections.[14] An even more mysterious appearance in the sphere of Latin literature than Phaedrus is this Romulus with his son Tiberinus. Some authorities believe that Romulus is only a fictitious name. In the foreword, according to Nilant, occur these words, "Romulus, ruler of the city of Rome, sends greetings to his son Tiberinus."[15] The name of a Roman ruler appears thus to have been invented in order to provide greater respect for the fables. It is a well-known fact that in the Middle Ages, the Aesopic fable collections were used as school books for children and there could not fail to be a challenge to arrange such collections, partly translated from the Greek, partly taken from Latin writings, and modified to suit the needs of the times.[16] Since some of the oldest manuscripts of Roman fables were found at Dijon, it seems plausible that France should be considered the possible fatherland of the writer of these fables.[17] Jacobs[18] thinks it probable that they were written at the schools of Charles the Great in the ninth century. The Romulus collection contains eighty-one fables and a few prologues and epilogues. About half of them are prose versions of the fables of Phaedrus, for not only individual words but entire groups of words agree. Some authorities think that Romulus used another still more ancient collection than Phaedrus.[19] But even in that case, Phaedrus is seen to be the dominant element.

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14 Oesterley - Romulus Collection, p. 38, Berlin 1870

15 Kerler: op. cit. 60, "Romulus, urbis Romae imperator, Tiberino filio suo salutem mittet."

16 Kerler: op. cit. 61

17 Kerler: op. cit. p. 62.

18 Jacobs, J. - The Fables of Aesop - Preface XVIII, London 1889

19 Kerler: op. cit. p. 67.

## III PROVERBS, FABLES, AND MAXIMS ACCORDING TO MORAL INTERPRETATION.

The Romans have few proverbs which treat of family life. Maternal love, setting forth the idea that parenthood exists through affection rather than through the ties of nature is illustrated in the fable of "The Dog to the Lamb,"

> Facit parentes bonitas, non necessitas.[1]
> Bonitas parentes facit non ut dicitur nativitas.[2]

The following maxim throws some light upon Roman family life:

> Ames parentem, si aequus est, si aliter, feras.[3]

The belief that it is always praiseworthy for children to listen to the admonitions of their parents, is illustrated in the fable of "The Kid and the Wolf,"

> Precepta audire parentem, semper laus est natorum."[4]

The idea that good fortune lies in virtue and consequently that a man who is unexpectedly generous can deceive the foolish, but not the wise, is set forth in the fable of "The Thief and the Dog,"

> Repente liberalis stultis gratus est;
> Verum irritos tendit dolos.[5]
> De seductoribus audiamus fabulam.[6]

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1 Phaedrus III, 15.
2 Romulus II, 6.
3 Syrus 8. Woelfflin's ed.
4 Romulus II, 10.
5 Phaedrus I, 23.
6 Romulus II, 3.

It is well for venders to utilize their opportunities and to turn their goods to the best advantage. Those who have it in their power to be generous or to injure will be fortunate in choosing the right according to the fable, "The Vender of Statuary,"

> Convenit hoc illis quibus est permissa potestas,
> An praestare magis seu nocuisse velint.[7]

The fact that little friends may prove great friends and consequently are not to be despised is illustrated in the fable of "The Lion and the Mouse,"

> Monet haec fabula, ne quis minimos ledat.[8]

The following proverbs set forth the worth of virtue:

> Ipsa quidem virtus pretium sibi.[9]
> Virtus in astra tendit; in mortem timor.[10]
> Qui per virtutem peritat, non interit.[11]
> Gloria virtutem tamquam umbra sequitur.[12]

The condemnation of egotism, showing that he is deservedly ridiculed who makes vain threats is illustrated in the fable of "The Fly and the Mule,"

> Hac derideri fabula merito potest,
> Qui sine virtute vanas exercet minas.[13]

When a vain man is puffed up by a passing favor, or overcome by his foolish presumption, his pride brings him to derision, according to the fable of "The Prince as a Flute-player."

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7 Avianus 23.
8 Romulus I, 17.
9 Claudianus: InCons. Mall. Theod. I.
10 Seneca: Her. Oet. 1971.
11 Plautus: Capt. 690.
12 Cicero: Tusc. Disp. I, 45.
13 Phaedrus III, 6.

Ubi vanus animus, aura captus frivola,
Arripuit insolentem sibi fiduciam,
Facile ad derisum stulta levitas ducitur.[14]

He who tries to teach his master will get nothing but contempt for his pains. This side of egotism is set forth in the fable of "The Bull and the Calf,"

Qui doctiorem emendat, sibi dici putet.[15]

We have been provided with pleasures as well as necessities, but things most useful to us should be preferred to ornaments of beauty. However, one should not comment on the lack in others of the qualities which he himself possesses. This idea is clearly brought out in the fable of "The Crane and the Peacock,"

Illa, licet nullo pennarum certet honore,
His tamen insultans vocibus usa datur.[16]

The fact that every man has his own place, and therefore that it is foolish for one to put himself above another, is illustrated in the fable of "The River-fish and the Sea-fish,"

Tunc me nobilior magno mercabitur emptor,
Te simul aere brevi debile vulgus emet.[17]

The idea that it is the work of virtue to prove by deeds and not by words and pictures, is clearly evident in the fable of "The Lion and the Man,"

Virtutis opus est factis aliquid probare.[18]

Some people who are nothing to others, magnify themselves, according to the fable of "The Camel and the Flea,"

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[14] Phaedrus V, 7.
[15] Phaedrus V, 9.
[16] Avianus 15.
[17] Avianus 38.
[18] Romulus IV, 17.

Hanc illi audiant fabulam qui nec gravare nec iuvare
aliquando possunt meliores. [19]

One may be said to have no head, to whom fortune has given honor and glory, but has denied common sense. This is illustrated in the fable of "The Fox to the Tragic Actor,"

Solent mendaces luere poenas malefice.[20]
Haec de illis dicuntur qui gloriam et honorem
habent, sensum autem non habent ullum. [21]

We cannot seeour own faults, but when we see others fail in a like manner we are critics and censors, according to the fable of "Jupiter and the Vices of Men,"

Hac re viders nostra mala non possumus,
Alii simul delinquunt, censores sumus. [22]

It is evident from the fable of "The Ant and the Fly," that one should never boast of intruding where he is not wanted.

Fabella talis hominum disceruit notas
Earum qui se falsis ornant laudibus, [23]
Et quorum virtus exhibet solidum decus. [24]
Quisquis se landaverit, ad nihilum devenit.

The fact that many make great promises but accomplish nothing, is brought out in the fable of "The Mountain Brings Forth a Mouse,"

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[19] Romulus IV, 18.

[20] Phaedrus I, 7.

[21] Romulus II, 15.

[22] Phaedrus IV, 10.

[23] Phaedrus IV, 22.

[24] Romulus II, 18.

Hoc scriptum est tibi, qui magna quum minaris,
extricas nihil. [25]
Mons ille qui parturiebat geminos magnos,
agens deinde peperit murem. [26]
Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. [27]

One should never take pride in his marks of disgrace, for it is better to go hungry in freedom than to be well fed in slavery, according to the fable of "The Dog and the Bell,"

Non hoc virtutis decus ostentatur in aere,
Nequitiae testem sed geris inde sonum. [28]

We are apt to ascribe our success to ourselves and charge our misfortunes to our neighbors. We are ever unwilling to take the blame for our own actions. This characteristic of mankind is pointed out in the fable of "The Country-man and his Treasure."

Sed cum subrepto fueris tristissimus auro,
Me primam lacrimis sollicitabis inops. [29]

Men who spend their lives in leisure and luxury are accustomed to ridicule plain, honest people, forgetting that honest labor is safe and creditable, according to the fable of "The Ox and the Heifer,"

Est hominum sors ista, magis felicibus ut mors
Sit cita, cum miseros vita diurus necat. [30]

The following proverbs show the Roman views on egotism:

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[25] Phaedrus IV, 21.
[26] Romulus II, 5.
[27] Horace: Ars Poetica 139.
[28] Avianus 7.
[29] Avianus 12.
[30] Avianus 36.

Dona ductoris pereunt, garrulitate sui.[31]
Miremur te non tua.[32]
Qui genus iactat suum aliena laudat.[33]
Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur.[34]
Casua quem saepe transit, aliquando invenit.[35]
Ne sus Minervam.[36]
Omnes sibi malle melius esse, quam alteri.[37]

The Roman idea of friendship is illustrated in the fable "Socrates to his Friend." The name friend is common but true friendship is rare.

Vulgare amici nomen, sed rara est fides.[38]

It is evident from the fable "Androculus and the Lion," that it pays to be kind for true friendship is proved in time of trouble.

Hoc notum debet esse ut omnes homines
bonas sibi reddant invicem gratias.[39]

The following proverbs also refer to friendship.

Communia esse amicorum inter se omnia.[40]
Secreto amicos admone, lauda palam.[41]
Amicum perdere est damnorum maximum.[42]

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31 Martial V, 52, 7.
32 Juvenal 8, 68.
33 Seneca: Herc. Fur. 340.
34 Horace: Sat. I, 3, 67.
35 Seneca: Herc. Fur. 328.
36 Festus p. 310, Müller.
37 Terence: And. 426.
38 Phaedrus III, 9.
39 Romulus III, 1.
40 Terence: Ad. 804.
41 Syrus. 103
42 Seneca: Epist. 99, 3.

Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur.[43]
Ubi amici, ibidem opes.[44]

Condemnation of harsh critism is illustrated in the fable of "The Sparrow and the Hare." We ought to have sympathy with the afflictions of another, for no one can tell whose turn may be next. No one should ridicule the unfortunate who is in danger of being unfortunate himself. However, he who does not take care of himself, but spends his time in giving advice to others is foolish.

Sibi non cavere, et aliis consilium dare, stultum esse.[45]

The fable, "The Poet" was written for ignorant people who, in order to give themselves the appearance of wisdom, amuse themselves by criticizing even the works of divinity.

Hoc illis dictum est, si qui stulti nauseant,
Et, ut putentur saperes coelum vituperant.[46]

It is time lost to advise others to do what we either do not or cannot do ourselves. Example is far more important than precept, according to the fable of "The River-crab and its Mother."

Cui natus faciam, si me praecesseris, inquit,
Rectaque monstrantem certior ipse sequar.[47]

Adverse criticism is also the subject of these proverbs.

Contumeliam si dicis, audies.[48]
Difficilem oportet aurem habere ad crimina[49]
Nam inimici famam non ita, ut nata est, ferunt.[50]

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43 Ennius: Sc. 210. (Vahlen)
44 Plautus: Truc. 885.
45 Phaedrus I, 9.
46 Phaedrus IV, 7.
47 Avianus 3.
48 Plautus: Pseud. 1173.
49 Syrus 133.
50 Plautus: Pers. III, 1, 23.

People who take particular delight in displeasing others are condemned in the fable of "The Bald Man and the Fly." It is necessary to pardon one who has committed an involuntary fault, but he who purposely seeks to injure is deserving of great punishment.

> Nam qui consilio est nocens, illum esse
> quavis dignum poena indico. [51]
> Qui sibi iniuriam fecit alio pulsante,
> irridendus non est. [52]

A malicious will can never be mastered by generosity, kindness, or advice. The greater effort one uses upon it, the worse it becomes. This idea is clearly brought out in the fable of "A Countryman and an Ox."

> Nimirum exemplum naturae derat iniquae,
> Qua fieri posset cum ratione nocens. [53]

It is evident from the fable "The Frog and the Mouse Cross the Stream," that those who plan calamities against the safety of another, do not escape punishment.

> Qui de salute alterius adversa cogitat
> Non effugit poenam. [54]

The following proverbs treat of people who like to displease:

> Malevolus animus abditos dentes habet. [55]
> Lingua mali pars pessima servi. [56]
> Paucorum improbitas universis calamitas. [57]

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51 Phaedrus V, 3.
52 Romulus II, 13.
53 Avianus 28.
54 Romulus I, 3.
55 Syrus 341
56 Juvenal: Sat III, 9, 121.
57 Syrus 485.

The fact that deceit often triumphs is illustrated in the fable of "The Dog and her Young." Good people lose their property who trust others through bland words.

> Habent insidias hominis blanditiae mali.[58]
> Blanda verba hominis mali graves faciunt iniurias.[59]

Men are accustomed to follow popular favor and while they are full of their own false judgements evidence forces them to repent. This is the idea set forth in the fable of "The Buffoon and the Peasant."

> Pro indicio dum stant erroris sui
> Ad poenitendum rebus manifestis agi.[60]

A warning against the invitations of the deceitful is given in the fable "The Birthday Dinner of the Crow."

> Haec fabula facta est in illos qui opem
> hilariter tribuentes contraria machinantur.[61]

The following proverbs point out the triumph of deceit:

> Successus improborum plures allicit.[62]
> Prosperum et felix scelus Virtus vocatus.[63]
> Dumque punitur scelus crescit.[64]
> Nullum ad nocendum tempus angustum est malis.[65]

Condemnation of gossip is illustrated in the fable of "The Eagle, the Cat, and the Boar." Foolish credulity can show through this example, how much evil a treacherous tongue can often cause. Meddlers are a dangerous sort of people to deal with. Meddling is the bane of all trust and confidence.

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58 Phaedrus I, 19.
59 Romulus I, 9.
60 Phaedrus V, 5.
61 Romulus IV, 11.
62 Phaedrus II, 4.
63 Seneca: Herc. Fur. 251.
64 Seneca: Thyest. 31.
65 Seneca: Med. 292.

Gossip is also condemned in the following proverbs:

Damnum appellandum est cum mala fama lucrum.[66]
Quem fama semel oppressit, vix restituitur.[67]

The fact that deceit and bad faith are usually punished, is set forth in the fable of "The Haughty Jack-daw and the Peacock." He who assumes the ways, manners, or appearance of another must expect to be laughed at. This applies to all sorts of imposters and vain pretenders.

Ne gloriari libeat alienis bonis[68]
Suoque potius habitu vitam degere.

It is pleasant to watch knaves try to outwit each other, for it is right to deceive a thief when you can, according to the fable of "The Boy and the Thief."

Perdita, quisquis erit, posthaec bene pallia credat,
Qui putat in liquidis quod natet urna vadis.[69]

Man may tell the truth with his tongue and deceive with his eyes. This is illustrated in the fable of "The Wolf and the Ox-driver."

Haec illos increpat fabula qui bilingues esse videntur.[70]

The belief that one who makes himself known for disgraceful deceit passes as an impostor, even when he tells the truth, is illustrated in the fable, "The Ape as Judge over the Wolf and Fox."

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[66] Syrus 135.
[67] Syrus 520.
[68] Phaedrus I, 3.
[69] Avianus 25.
[70] Romulus IV, 3.

Quicunque turpi fraude semel innatuit,
Etiamsi verum dicit, amittit fidem. [71]
Qui semel fraude inclaruit semper turpiter vivit,
etsi verum dicat non illi creditur. [72]

One should not trust the fair words of those who are known to be hostile, especially when kindly aid is offered under the mask of friendship, according to the fable of "The Lion and the Horse."

Quicumque artem ignorant, illi se produnt.

Those who pretend to serve two masters at the same time are true to neither. It is not allowed to change sides more than once. This idea is set forth in the fable of "The Birds, the Beasts, and the Bat."

Sic itaque oportet ut patiantur qui ad alias vadunt. [73]

He who lies in wait for others ought to fear lest he be captured himself, according, to the fable of "The Hawk and the Nightingale with the Young Ones."

Qui aliis insidiatur oportet ut ipse timeat ne
cum sua preveniat malitia. [74]

The fable "The Fox and the Wolf with Provisions" advises not to inform upon one's neighbor for one's own advantage.

Sic homines timere debent ne aliquem ledant. [75]

The following proverbs deal with the punishment of deceit and bad faith:

Proditores etiam iis quos anteponunt,
invisi sunt. [76]
Fraus est accipere quod non possis reddere. [77]

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72 Romulus II, 19.
73 Romulus III, 4.
74 Romulus III, 5.
75 Romulus III, 6.
76 Tacitus: Ann. I, 58.
77 Syrus 172.

Hypocrisy is unmasked in the fable of the "Ass and the Lion-skin." He who vaunts his own glory may deceive strangers, but he will be ridiculed by those who do know him. One general mark of an impostor is that he outdoes the original. Men naturally love to be thought greater, wiser, and braver than they are, but all things are best according to their own nature.

> Virtutis expers, verbis iactans gloriam,
> Ignotos fallit, notis est derisui.[78]
> Multi credunt voce sua fortes terrere sicut debiles.[79]
> Forsitan ignotos imitato murmure fallas,
> At mihi, qui quondam, semper asellus eris.[80]
> Vel merito quoniam in propria non pelle quiessem.[81]

The fact that some people act only for their own interests but vaunt their pretended merits to credulous people, is set forth in the fable of "The Weasel and the Man."

> Hoc in se dictum debent illi agnoscere,
> Quorum privata servit utilitas sibi,
> Et meritum inane jactant imprudentibus,[82]

There are those who by their stupidity enrich the impudent, according to the fable of "The Shoemaker Pretends to be a Doctor."

> Hoc pertinere vere ad illas dixerim,
> Quorum stultitia quaestus impudentiae est.[83]

The fable of "The Weasel, the Master, and the Mice," shows how some people claim a reward for deeds performed only for their own benefit.

> Quibus servi serviunt benivoli, saepe illis ita
> reddunt merita domini cui.[84]

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78 Phaedrus I, 11.
79 Romulus IV, 10.
80 Avianus 5.
81 Horace: Sat. I, 6, 22.
82 Phaedrus I, 22.
83 Phaedrus I, 14.
84 Romulus II, 20.

The fact that pleasure counts more than honor with some, is illustrated in the fable of "The Faithless Lover and the Young Man."

> Ergo inquit tu mea lux, non quod mihi fidem
> servaveris, sed quod mihi, incunda es.[85]

The fable of the "The Tired Ass and the Wolf," advises that the sympathy of bad men ought never to be trusted.

> Malorum hominum numquam fides credenda est.[86]

The following proverbs show the Roman view of hypocrisy:

> Cuius rei libet simulator atque dissimulator.[87]
> Nulli iactantius maerent quam qui maxime laetantur.[88]
> Refert sis bonus, an velis videre.[89]
> Vera redit facies, dissimulata perit.[90]

The Roman idea of ingratitude is illustrated in the fable of "The Wolf and the Crane." He who demands of the wicked a recompense for a good deed commits two faults: first, that of aiding the undeserving; second, that of running into certain danger. It is not easy for the greedy to be grateful.

> Qui pretium meriti ab improbis desiderat,
> Bis peccat; primum, quoniam indignos iuvat,
> Impune abire deinde quia iam non potest.[91]
> Haec illos monet, qui volunt bene facere malis.[92]

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85 Romulus III, 10.
86 Romulus IV, 15.
87 Sallust: Cat. 5, 4.
88 Tacitus: Ann. 2, 77.
89 Martial VIII, 38, 7.
90 Petronius: Satyr. C. 80.
91 Phaedrus I, 8
92 Romulus I, 8.

When a cunning man finds himself in danger, he seeks escape from it at the expense of another. One must beware of want of foresight as well as of bad company. This is the moral set forth in the fable of "The Fox and the Goat."

> Homo in periculum simul ac venit callidus,
> Reperire effugium alterius quaerit malo. [93]

In the fable of "A Thief Robbing an Altar," it is pointed out that those whom we have helped often become our worst enemies. The gods do not avenge themselves through anger, but they mete out punishment to the guilty, according to the time set by destiny.

> Significat primo saepe, quos alueris,
> Tibi inveniri maxime contrarios. [94]

He who aids the wicked will after a time repent, for he himself will be injured by them, according to the fable of "The Snake and the Man."

> Qui fert malis auxilium, post tempus dolet. [95]
> Qui fert malo auxilium sciat quia satis peccat et
> cum illi benefecerit, sciat se noceri ab illo. [96]

The fable of "The Hunter and the Dog" illustrates the fact that in old age not courage, but strength is lacking. They who once boasted of a servant's strength, now complain of his weakness.

> Non te destituit animus, sed vires meae.
> Quod fuimus laudasti, iam damnas quod sumus. [97]

It is evident from the fable "The Old Hound," that one should not blame the

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[93] Phaedrus IV, 9.
[94] Phaedrus IV, 11.
[95] Phaedrus IV, 17.
[96] Romulus I, 10.
[97] Phaedrus V, 10.

faults of old age, but remember the good deeds done in youth.

Haec fabula nobis probat, quod si quis bene egit
invenis ut senex non contemnatur. [98]

The following proverbs throw some light upon the Roman ideas of ingratitude.

Nil homine terra peius ingrato creat. [99]
Ingratus unus miseris omnibus nocet. [100]
Ingratus est qui remotis arbitris agit gratiam. [101]

The worth of independence is set forth in the fable of "The Stag in the Cattle Shed." A master is most capable in his own affairs.

Haec significat fabula, dominum videre plurimum in rebus suis. [102]
Haec fabula probat dominum plurimum posse in
omnibus rebus videre. [103]

The following proverbs treat of independence:

Sibi quisque ruri metit. [104]
Leve aes alienum debitorem facit,
Grave inimicum. [105]
Regnare nolo, liber ut non sim mihi. [106]

The distinctions between sincerity and falsehood are clearly brought out in the fable "The Wolf as Sponsor for the Stag." When an impostor calls upon a wicked man as a security, without doubt he is planning mischief.

Fraudator hominem quum vocat sponsum improbum,

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98 Romulus II, 7.
99 Ausonius: Epigr. 140, 1.
100 Syrus: 243.
101 Seneca: Ben. 2, 23.
102 Phaedrus II, 8.
103 Romulus III, 19.
104 Plautus: Most. 799.
105 Seneca: Ep. 19.
106 Phaedrus III, 7, 27.

Non rem expedire, sed malum dare expetit.[107]
Docet haec fabula, caute quibuscumque credere.[108]

One should not pretend to despise what he cannot obtain, according to the fable of "The Fox and the Grapes."

Qui facere quae non possunt, verbis elevant,
Adscribere hac debebunt exemplum sibi.[109]
Ita qui nihil facere possunt, verbis tantum se
posse et nolle ostendunt.[110]

It is evident from the fable of "The Nurse and the Child" that many times men's words do not agree with their actions.

Haec sibi dicta putet, seque hac sciat arte notari,
Femineam quisquis credidit esse fidem.[111]

The idea that among bad men those who lie are loved and those who tell the truth are punished is illustrated in the fable of "The Deceiver, the Honest Man and the Apes."

Hoc modo fieri et a malis hominibus solet ut
fallacia et malitia ametur, et honestas
vel veritas laceretur.[112]

The following proverbs treat of sincerity and falsehood:

Quaedam falsa, veri speciem ferunt.[113]
Bonum quod est supprimitur, numquam extinguitur.[114]

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107 Phaedrus I, 16.
108 Romulus II, 12.
109 Phaedrus IV, 3.
110 Romulus IV, 1.
111 Avianus 1.
112 Romulus IV, 8.
113 Seneca: De Ira, II, 22.
114 Syrus 63.

The Roman conception of revenge is illustrated in the fable of "The Fox and the Stork." What you do not wish to be done to yourself, do not do to another, for he who offends ought to be punished in the same manner.

> Si quis vero laeserit, multandum simili iure.[115]
> Quod tibi non vis fieri alio ne facias. [116]

Do not underestimate the powers of those beneath you. Men in however high a station ought to fear the humble, because revenge is easy to quick-witted cunning. This is the advice given in the fable of "The Fox and the Eagle."

> Quamvis sublimes debent humiles metuere,
> Vindicta docili quia patet solertiae. [117]
> Potentes metuere debent infimos. [118]

Those whom one offends ordinarily seek to avenge themselves according to the fable of "The Panther and the Villagers."

> Solet a despectis par referri gratia.[119]
> Opartet benivolos esse cuicunque perigrino,
> et si peccat ignoscendum est,
> Nescit ubi reddat gratiam. [120]

The fable of "The Boar and the Horse," advises irritable men to remember that it is much better to endure an insult than to surrender to a stranger.

> Haec iracundos admonebit fabula,
> Impune potius laedi, quam dedi alteri. [121]

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115 Phaedrus I, 26.
116 Romulus II, 14.
117 Phaedrus I, 28.
118 Romulus II, 8.
119 Phaedrus III, 2.
120 Romulus IV, 5.
121 Phaedrus IV, 5.

The wicked man who attacks another worse than himself may recognize himself in the fable of "The Serpent and the File." It is useless to attack the insensible. Every man should consider his own strength and act accordingly.

> Mordaciorem qui improbo dente appetit,
> Hoc argumento se describi sentiat.[122]
> Malus peiorem non ledit nec iniquus iniquum superat.[123]
> Fragili quaerens illidere dentem offendet solido.[124]

We should never take advantage of the misfortunes of another. It is wise to put up with the injuries of a weaker enemy for fear of incurring the displeasure of a stronger. This advice is given in the fable of "The Bull and the Goat."

> Nam si discedat, nosces, stultissime,
> Quantum discrepat a tauri viribus hircus olens.[125]

It is evident from the fable of "The Cow and the Mouse " that there is nothing more ridiculous than an impotent anger used to no advantage.

> Disce tamen brevibus quae sit fiducia rostris,
> et facias quicqiud parvula turba cupit.[126]

The fable "The Horse Defeats the Stag," advises one to be careful when he wishes to harm others, lest he himself be subjugated.

> Illos increpat haec fabula qui cum
> aliis voluerunt nocere, se patius subiugant.[127]

Revenge is also the topic of the following proverbs:

> Minute semper et infirmi est animi exigui que voluptas ultio.[128]

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122 Phaedrus IV, 8.
123 Romulus III, 12.
124 Horace: Sat. II, 1, 75.
125 Avianus 13.
126 Avianus 31.
127 Romulus IV, 9.
128 Juvenal 13, 189.

At vindicta bonum vita iucundius ipsa.[129]

The condemnation of flatterers, showing that he who rejoices in being praised with flattering words will endure punishment by repentence too late, is illustrated in the fable of "The Fox and the Raven with the Cheese."

Hac reprobatur, ingenium quantum valet,
Virtute et semper praevalet sapientia.[130]
Qui se laudari gaudent, verbis subdolis,
Decepti penitent.[131]
Plerumque recoctus scriba ex quinqueviro
coroum deludet hiantem.[132]

When the enemy flatters be on your guard. He who makes no concessions to others is almost always punished for his pride, according to the fable of "The Grasshopper and the Night-owl."

Humanitati qui se non accommodat,
Plerumque poenas oppetit superbiae.[133]

Roman ideas of flattery are expressed in the following proverbs:

Sed mihi credite, venenum sub melle latet.[134]
Litum melle gladium.[135]

Envy is condemned in the fable of "The Frog that Burst." The poor die in trying to imitate the rich. Pride, envy and ambition lead men on to destruction.

Inops, potentem dum vult imitari, perit.[136]

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129 Juvenal 13, 180.
130 Phaedrus I, 13.
131 Romulus I, 14.
132 Horace: Sat. II, 5, 55.
133 Phaedrus III, 16.
134 Hieronymus: Ep. 15, 4.
135 Hieronymus: Ep. 105, 2.
136 Phaedrus I, 24.

Potentem cum quis pauper vult imitare crepat,[137]
Absentis ranae pullis vituli pede pressis.[138]

The fable of "The Peacock's Complaint to Juno" advises to guard against envy of that which one does not have, for deluded hopes lapse into regrets. Each one has his rightful share of blessings, therefore contentment should take the place of envy.

Noli affectare, quod tibi non est datum,
Delusa ne spes ad querelam recidat.[139]
Tu vero queris quod tibi adiis non est datum.[140]

Nothing is either safe or easy which is unnatural. It is vain hope for a creature made for one place to aspire to another. This moral is illustrated in the fable of "The Tortoise and the Eagle."

Qui tutus et munitus est, malo consiliatore everti potest.[141]
Sic quicumque nova sublatus laude tumescit.
Dat merito poenas, dum meliora cupit.[142]

Unnatural wishes ought not only to be rejected but they deserve punishment. Man is never content with his lot, according to the fable of "The Camel Praying for Horns."

Contentum propriis sapientem vivere rebus
Non cupere alterius, fabula nostra monet.[143]

It is evident from the fable of "A Covetous Man and an Envious Man " that covetousness and envy are two of the worst vices. An envious man finds his happiness in the misfortunes of others.

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137 Romulus II, 21.
138 Horace: Sat. II, 3, 314.
139 Phaedrus VII, 18.
140 Romulus IV, 4.
141 Romulusl, 13.
142 Avianus, 2.
143 Avianus, 8.

Invidiaeque malum rettulit ipse Jovi,
Quae dum proventis aliorum gaudet iniquis.
Laetior infelix et sua damna cupit. [144]

Envy is condemned in the following proverbs:-

Invidia loquitur quod subest, non quod videt. [145]
Vitium fuit nunc mos est assentatio. [146]
Numquam eminentia invidia carent. [147]
Nulla tam modesta felicitas est, quae
malignitatis dentes vitare possit. [148]
Est enim hoc commune vitium
Magnis liberisque civitatibus, ut invidia gloriae comes sit. [149]

The belief that happiness lies in mediocrity, setting forth the idea that the humble are safe while riches expose us to great peril, is illustrated in the fable of "The Two Mules and the Robbers."

Hoc argumento tuta est hominum tenuitas,
Magnae periclo sunt opes obnoxiae. [150]

It is evident from the fable "The War of the Mice and the Weasles " that when a great revolution threatens a state, the elevation of the great exposes them to perils, while the common people find an easy safeguard in their obscurity.

Quumcunque populum tristis eventus premit,
Periclitatur magnitudo principum,
Minuta plebes facili praesidio. [151]

The fable of "Hercules and Plutus" sets forth the idea that it is right for a strong man to despise riches because a rich coffer hinders true praise.

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144 Avianus 22.
145 Syrus 262.
146 Syrus 385.
147 Velleius 2, 40, 4.
148 Valerius Maximus 4, 7.
149 Sallust: Jugur. 55, 3.
150 Phaedrus II, 7.
151 Phaedrus IV, 6.

Apes invisae merito sunt forti viro,
Quia dives arca veram laudem intercipit. [152]

Poverty secures a man from thieves whereas the rich and mighty are a mark of malice. Humility is a virtue which never goes without a blessing, according to the fable of "The Fir and the Bramble."

Cum pulchra minax succidet membra securis,
Quam velles spinas tunc habuisse meas. [153]

The moral is brought out in the fable of "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse," that poverty in security is much better than wealth in danger.

Haud mihi vita est opus hac, et valeas;
me silva cavusque tutus ab insidiis tenui solabitur ervo. [154]

The fable of "The Stag at the Spring" warns that in the hour of danger, what we prize most is often of least service. We favor that which is fair in appearance for that which is plain and useful.

The following proverbs set forth the advantages of mediocrity:

Fortuna nimium quem fovet, stultum facit. [155]
Misera est magna custodia census. [156]
Rarus enim fere sensus communis in illa Fortuna. [157]
Imperat aut servit collecta pecunia cuique. [158]
Nam neque divitibus contingunt gaudia solis. [159]
Bonae mentis soror est paupertas. [160]

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152 Phaedrus IV, 12.
153 Avianus 19.
154 Horace: Sat. II, 6, 114.
155 Syrus 173.
156 Juvenal 14, 304.
157 Juvenal 8, 73.
158 Horace: Ep. 1, 10, 77.
159 Horace: Ep. 1, 17, 9.
160 Petronius: Satyr. c. 84.

Fortuna miserrima tuta est.[161]
Tam deest avaro quod habet, quam quod non habet.[162]

Roman views on industry are illustrated in the fable of "The Ant and the Grasshopper." It is always best to prepare for days of necessity, for they who do not labor shall not eat.

Haec fabula pigrum docet ut tempare certo laboret,
ne dum minus habuerit non accipiat.[163]
Quisquis torpentem passus transisse inventam
nec timuit vitae providus ante mala.[164]

When a useless service is performed, labor is wasted and freedom is not granted, according to the fable "Tiberius to his Servant."

Gratis anhelans, multa agendo nihil agens,
Sibi molesta at aliis odiosissima.[165]

The following proverbs treat of industry:-

Labor omnia vincit improbus.[166]
Nihil sine magno vita labore dedit mortalibus.[167]

Condemnation of cowardice is illustrated in the fable of "Two Friends and a Bear." In times of danger, every man is for himself, yet a true friend proves himself in times of adversity.

Ne facile alterius repetas consortia, dixit,
Rursus ab insana ne capiare fera.[168]

The fable of "The Frogs and the Hares" points out that every man's own lot is undoubtedly the best, for one is seldom so badly off that there are not others
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161 Ovid: Ep. 2, 2, 31.
162 Syrus. 628.
163 Romulus IV, 19.
164 Avianus 34.
165 Phaedrus II, 5.
166 Virgil G. I, 145.
167 Horace: Sat. 1, 9, 59.
168 Avianus 9.

in a worse plight. People are often afraid from trivial causes.

> Qui sustinere non potest malum
> alios inspiciat et tolerare discat. [169]

Sometimes powerful persons can be displaced by inferior ones. This idea is brought out in the fable "The Lion Afraid of a Horse."

> Sic ergo saepius potentibus personis ab
> inferioribus detrahi solet. [170]

The Roman idea of courage is also given in these proverbs:

> Mater timidi flere non solet. [171]
> In pace leones, in proelis cervi. [172]
> Domi leones, foris vulpes. [173]
> Ante tubam tremor occupat artus. [174]
> Perida timidus etiam quae non sunt videt. [175]

Foolish advice is condemned in the fable of "The Famished Dogs." A foolish plan not only does not work but it also leads man on to destruction.

> Stultum consilium non modo effectu caret,
> Sed ad perniciem quoque mortales devocat. [176]

The fable of "The Dog and the Crocodile," points out that those who give bad advice to wise people waste their time, and cover themselves with shame and ridicule.

> Consilia qui dant prava cautis hominibus
> Et perdunt operam, et deridentur turpiter. [177]

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169 Romulus II, 9.
170 Romulus IV, 16.
171 Nepos: Thras. 2.
172 Tertullianus: Coron. Mil. 1.
173 Petronius 44, 4.
174 Virgil: Aen: 11, 424.
175 Syrus: 452.
176 Phaedrus I, 20.
177 Phaedrus I, 25.

The success of the wicked encourages many people. He that rewards past affronts encourages new ones, according to the fable of "The Man Bitten by a Dog."

Successus improborum plures allicit. [178]

The fable of "Aesop and the Peasant who Threw Stones," also shows that success lures many to danger.

Successus ad perniciem multos devocat.[179]

Trust not the invitations of an enemy, especially when he pretends to advise you for your own good, for you may be sure he is doing it for his own advantage. This idea is clearly brought out in the fable of "The Goat and the Lion."

Vera licet moneas, maiora pericula tollas,
Tu tamen his dictis non facis esse fidem. [180]

The following proverbs attack foolish advice:

Stultarum plena sunt omnia. [181]
Stultorum eventus magister est. [182]
Facile omnes cum valemus recta
consilia aegrotis damus. [183]
Malum consilium consultori est pessimum. [184]

The condemnation of greed is illustrated in the fable of "The Greedy Dog." One justly loses his own property when he wishes to take that of another. Many do not know when they are well off for they squander away what they have in order to get what they have not.

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178 Phaedrus II, 3.
179 Phaedrus III, 5.
180 Avianus 26.
181 Cicero: Ep. ad. Fam. IX, 22.
182 Livy 22, 39.
183 Terence: And. 308.
184 Annal. Max. Ap. Gellius 4, 5.

Amittet merito proprium, qui alienum appetit. [185]

It is evident from the fable of "The Dog, the Treasure, and the Vulture," that there are many greedy people of humble birth who desire to be called rich and in satisfying this desire, perish.

Haec res avaris esse conveniens potest,
Et qui humiles nati, dici locupletes student. [186]

The belief that the greedy should be given nothing, and the poor and humble should be given even that which they do not ask for is illustrated in the fable of "The Bullock, the Lion, and the Hunter." However, every day one sees greed enriching itself and moderation remaining poor.

Exemplum egregrium prorsus et laudabile.
Verum est aviditas dives, et pauper pudor. [187]

It is best to take what we can get and not to give up a certainty for an uncertainty, according to the fable "A Fisherman and a Little Fish."

Nam miserum est, inquit, praesentem amittere praedam,
Stultius et rursum vota futura sequi. [188]

The fable of "The Goose and the Golden Eggs," points out that vain desires and immoderate love of riches cause us to lose even what we do have. Covetousness knows no satisfaction.

Sic qui cuncta deos uno male tempore poscunt,
Iustius his etiam vota diurna negant. [189]

Greed is condemned in the following proverbs:

Desunt inopiae multa; avaritiae omnia. [190]

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185 Phaedrus I, 4.
186 Phaedrus I, 27.
187 Phaedrus II, 1.
188 Avianus 20.
189 Avianus 33.
190 Syrus 236.

Amore senescit habendi.[191]
Crescentem sequitur cura pecuniam
majorumque fames.[192]
Effodiuntur opes irritamenta malorum.[193]
Semper inops, quicumque cupit.[194]
Quod nimium ad rem in senecta attenti sumus.[195]

The Roman idea of perseverance is illustrated in the fable of "The Oak and the Willow." The weak hold out against the strong and by slow degrees surmount their menace and fury, but a wise and steady man bends only in the prospect of rising again.

Haec nos dicta monent magnis obsistere fluxa,
Paulatimque truces exsuperare minas.[196]

Perseverance is also the main topic of these proverbs:-

Omnia conando docilis solertia vicit.[197]
Consuetudo natura potentior est.[198]
Nil adsuetudine majus.[199]
Gravissimum est imperium consuetudinis.[200]

Praise of recreation is brought out in the fable "Aesop at Play." One ought sometimes to give repose to the mind in order that thoughts may present themselves again with new force.

Sic ludus animo debet aliquando dari
Ad cogitandum melior ut redeat tibi.[201]

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191 Horace: Ep. 1, 7, 85.
192 Horace: C. 3, 16, 17.
193 Ovid: M. 1, 140.
194 Claudius: In Rufin. 1, 200.
195 Terence: Ad. 954.
196 Avianus 16.
197 Manil. I, 95.
198 Curtius V, 5, 19.
199 Ovid: Art. Am. II, 345.
200 Syrus. 201
201 Phaedrus III, 14.

The value of recreation is also brought out in the following proverb:

Danda est remissio animis. [202]

Roman views on religious sentiment are illustrated in the fable "The Country Man and his Oxen." Prayers without works are nothing for providence assists nobody who does not help himself.

Disce tamen pigris non flecti numina votis
Praesentes que adhibe, cum facis ipse, deos. [203]

Whatever we may have of success we ascribe to ourselves; whatever of misfortune, we ascribe to providence, according to the fable "A Countryman and his Treasure."

Non inventa meis non prodis munera templis.
Atque alios mavis participare deos. [204]

The fable "Shipwreck of Simonides" points out how providence cares for the good. A wise man carries his riches with him.

Homo doctus in se semper divitias habet. [205]

The fable "The Gods Save Simonides," shows how the gods protect men of letters.

Ut est vulgatus ordo narratae rei,
Omnes scierunt numinum praesentiam
Vati dedisse vitam mercedis loco. [206]

The following proverbs show the Roman idea of religion:

Fortuna multis dat nimis satis nulli. [207]
Fortuna vitrea est, tum cum splendet, frangitur. [208]
Fortuna nimium quem fovet, stultum facit. [209]

Nothing but the consciousness of a virtuous life can make death easy for us.

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202 Seneca: De Tranq. 17.
203 Avianus 32.
204 Avianus 12.
205 Phaedrus IV, 20.
206 Phaedrus IV, 23.
207 Martial XII, 10, 2.
208 Syrus. 189.
209 Syrus 173.

There are many who spend their lives in wickedness and at the last moment wish to make some kind of restitution so that they may die in peace, - but it is then too late. This idea is found in the fable "The Sick Kite and the Altars."

Qui semper blasphemat in angustia quid rogat. [210]

Human life is the topic of the following proverbs:

Vita, si scias uti, longa est. [211]
Qui mente novissimus exit, lucis amor. [212]
Homo vitae commodatus, non donatus est. [213]

The Romans had a very strong feeling against the oppression of the innocent. This is vividly brought out in the fable of "The Wolf and the Lamb." The wicked oppress the innocent for fictitious reasons and do not trouble to justify their excuses. Innocence is no protection against the cruelty of a tyrannical power.

Haec propter illos scripta est homines fabula,
Qui fictis causis innocentes opprimunt. [214]
Haec in illos dicta est fabula qui hominibus calumniantur. [215]

Companionship with the powerful is never trustworthy. Ambition and greed know no bounds of justice, according to the fable of "The Cow, the Goat, the Sheep, and the Lion."

Numquam est fidelis cum potente societas,
Testatur haec fabella propositum meum. [216]
Cunctos monet haec fabula non sociari potentibus. [217]

It is evident from the fable "The Sheep Oppressed by the Dog and Wolf," that

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210 Romulus I, 18.
211 Seneca: De Brevit. Vit. 2.
212 Statius: Theb. VIII, 386.
213 Syrus 220.
214 Phaedrus I, 1.
215 Romulus I, 2.
216 Phaedrus I, 5.
217 Romulus I, 6.

liars seldom escape the punishment of their misdeeds. This fable refers to the professional accusers who flourished under Tiberius.

> Solent mendaces luere poenas malefice.[218]
> Sic calumniosi faciunt mala, innocentibus et miseris.[219]

The belief that he who is born unhappy not only leads a miserable life, but after death the harsh misery of fate follows him, is brought out in the fable of "The Ass and the Priests of Cybele."

> Qui natus est infelix, non vitam modo
> Tristem decurrit, verum post obitrem quoque.
> Persequitur illum dura fati miseria.[220]
> Multi post mortem vexantur.[221]

The fable of "The War of the Sheep and the Wolves," indicates that a foolish peace is more destructive than a bloody war. It is useless to establish an alliance among those who are by nature enemies.

> Defensorem et patronum non expedit relinquere.[222]

The fable of "The Sick Lion and the Wolf" points out that we should learn to profit by the mistakes of others.

> Sic quorundam periculum doctrina nobis debet esse
> nostra salutis, quia in domum potentis facile quisquam
> intrat exire vero tarde est.[223]

He that is a tyrant over one man is a slave to another. It is natural to be insolent toward those who will endure it and to show respect to those of a quarrelsome nature. This idea is illustrated in the fable of "The Crow and the

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218 Phaedrus I, 17.
219 Romulus I, 4.
220 Phaedrus IV, 1.
221 Romulus III, 18.
222 Romulus III, 13.
223 Romulus IV, 12.

Sheep."

Haec fabula in illas dicta est qui
infimis et eorum innocentie iniuriantur. [224]

Resignation to destiny is advised in the fable of "The Brother and the Sister." People should often consider themselves; - the handsome, lest they corrupt good looks by evil deeds; the homely, that they may improve their looks by good deeds.

Praecepto monitus, saepe te considera. [225]

The fable of "The Pilot and the Sailors," illustrates the fact that it is necessary to be moderate in our joy and in our sorrow for our entire life is only a change from pleasure to grief and back again.

Parce gaudere oportet, et sensim queri,
Totam quia vitam miscet dolor et gaudium. [226]

A miser's life is an example of folly. We are accustomed to persevere in doing wrong, under the pretense that we are forced to it by Providence, according to the fable of "The Fox and the Dragon."

Nolo irascaris, libere si dixero:
Diis est iratis natus, qui est similis tibi. [227]

The fable of "The Two Bald-headed Men " sets forth the idea that a man deluded in hope has the right to complain.

Quem spes delusit, huic querela convenit. [228]

Roman belief in resignation to destiny is also treated in these proverbs:-

Patientia animi occultas divitias habet. [229]
Rex est quique cupit nihil. [230]

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224 Romulus IV, 21.
225 Phaedrus III, 8.
226 Phaedrus IV, 15.
227 Phaedrus IV, 18.
228 Phaedrus V, 6.
229 Syrus 456.
230 Seneca: Thyest. 388.

Quod sis esse velis, nihil malis.[231]

Condemnation of the great and the court is illustrated in the fable of "The Old Lion and the Ass." He who loses his former dignity when in hard circumstances, is a joke even among cowards. He who governs tyrannically in his youth, must expect to be treated contemptuously in his old age.

Quicunque amisit dignitatem pristinam,
Ignavis etiam jocus est in casu gravi.[232]
Quisquis amittit dignitatem deponat audaciam
pristinam ne a quolibet iniuriam patiatur.[233]

The conflicts of the great concern the small for the humble suffer while the powerful quarrel. This idea is brought out in the fable of "The Frogs and the Fighting Bulls."

Humiles laborant, ubi potentes dissident.[234]

Unequal alliances are dangerous. The rich and the poor can never agree. The difference in circumstances is enough to bring disaster, according to the fable of "The Brass and Earthen Pot."

Nam me sive tibi sente mihi conferat unda,
Semper ero ambobus subdita sola malis.[235]

It is evident from the fable "A Hunter and a Tiger," that reason is more powerful than force.

Nulla quidem medio convenit in aggere forma,
Quaeque oculis olim sit repetenda meis.[236]

A thief is bad enough but what about the children of thieves? In the fable of

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231 Martial 10, 37, 12.
232 Phaedrus I, 21.
233 Romulus I, 15.
234 Phaedrus I, 30.
235 Avianus 11.
236 Avianus 17.

"The Frogs and the Sun," Phaedrus is thought to have reflected on the characters of Sejanus and Tiberius.

> Cogit que miseras arida sede emore,
> Quidnam futurum est, si crearet liberos? [237]
> A natura nemo mutatur, sed de malo peior noscitur.[238]

It is evident from the fable of "The Calf and the Cow," that it is often fitting to dominate over the weaker because it is difficult to dominate over the stronger.

> Quosdam minores saepe oportet domare,
> quis maiores difficile domare est. [239]

The following proverbs condemn the great and the court.

> Fuge magno. [240]
> Exeat aulo qui vult esse pius. [241]
> Non intrat unquam regium limen fides. [242]
> Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodes? [243]

Change of government is condemned in the fable of "The Frogs Who Demand a King." One should endure his present evils for fear that worse will come to him. It is impossible to satisfy people who know not what they want.

> Vos quoque, o cives, ait, hoc sustinete,
> Maius ne veniat malum.[244]
> Cum vos peteretis nolui, cum nollem invidiose petistis et
> quia noluistes bonum ferre, sustinete malum. [245]

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237 Phaedrus I, 6.
238 Romulus I, 7.
239 Romulus III, 11.
240 Horace: Sat. 2, 2, 54.
241 Lucan 8, 493.
242 Seneca; Agam. 285.
243 Juvenal: Sat. VI, 347.
244 Phaedrus I, 2.
245 Romulus II, 1.

In a change of government, there is for the poor, only a change of the name of the master, according to the fable of "The Ass and the Old Shepherd."

In principatu commutando civium
Nil praeter domini nomen mutant pauperes. [246]

The following proverbs throw further light upon change of government.

Sic tanquam pilam rapiunt inter se rei
publicae statum, tyranni ab regibus. [247]
Remedium frustra est contra fulmen quaerere. [248]
Remedia toties invenit nobis Deus periculis peiora. [249]

The fable of "The Kite and the Doves" advises caution. He who entrusts himself to an evil man for protection, finds only certain death.

Qui se committet homini tutandum improbo.
Auxilia dum requirit, exitium invenit. [250]
Qui se tutandum dederit homini improbo,
perdit male auxilium dum querit. [251]

The fable of "The Swallow and the Flaxseed," warns that he who scorns advice or is unwilling to listen to counsel will always fall into nets.

Qui non audit bonum consilium in se inveniet malum. [252]

It is plainly evident from the fable "The Tree Gives Wood for Axes," that he who gives aid to his enemy, prepares his own destruction.

Auxilium hosti dare suam necem facere est. [253]

The fable of "The Fowler and the Curious Birds," points out that it cannot be doubted but that by the counsel of one, many can be freed from danger.

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246 Phaedrus I, 15.
247 Cicero: De Repub. 1, 44.
248 Syrus 582.
249 Seneca: Med. 436.
250 Phaedrus I, 31.
251 Romulus II, 2.
252 Romulus I, 19.
253 Romulus III, 14.

Monet haec fabula non dubium fieri posse
ab unius consilio multos de periculo liberari.[254]

Caution is also advised in the following proverbs:

Festinatio improvida est et caeca.[255]
Nihil ordinatum est, quod praecipitatur.[256]
Caret periculo, qui etiam tutus cavet.[257]
Quid quisque vitet, nunquam homine satis cautum est in horas.[258]
Latet anguis in herba.[259]

The troublesome are condemned in the fable, "The Ass Makes Fun of the Boar." Often when a fool tries to joke he incurs unpleasantness.

Plerumque stulti risum dum captant levem,
Gravi distringunt alios contumelia.[260]
Monet haec fabula insipientibus parci debere, stultos
autem defendere qui insultare audent melioribus.[261]

In the fable "Aesop and the Impertinent Man," he is not regarded as a man who hinders and ridicules besides. Humor can be out of place.

Sensit profecto, se hominem non visum seni,
Intempestive qui occupato alluserit.[262]

The fable "The Pig and his Master," points out that there is no hope for the one who takes no warning.

Haec illas descripta monent, qui saepius ausi
Numquam peccatis abstinuere manus.[263]

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254 Romulus IV, 7.
255 Livy XXII, 39.
256 Seneca: Ep. 40.
257 Syrus. 116.
258 Horace: C. 2, 13, 13.
259 Virgil. E. 3, 93.
260 Phaedrus I, 29.
261 Romulus I, 11.
262 Phaedrus III, 19.
263 Avianus 30.

It is wiser for the slow-witted not to joke, according to the fable of "The Ass and the Little Dog."

> Quem non decet reddere officia
> ut quid se ingerit melioribus? [264]

The fable "The Ape and the Fox'es Tail," warns not to ask where a refusal may be expected.

> O avare, te nunc increpat fabula qui non
> das quod tibi superat. [265]

The following proverb condemns the troublesome:

> Nam adversus miseros inhumanus est iocus. [266]

The belief that unity makes strength is illustrated in the fable of "The Eagle, the Crow and the Tortoise." Against the powerful, no one has sufficient means of defence, but if a wicked man adds some advice destruction is certain for nothing can resist force and malice.

> Si vero accessit consiliator maleficus [267]
> Vis et nequitia quid quid oppugnant, ruit.

The fable of "The Four Bulls and the Lion" shows the advantage of union and the disadvantage of division.

> Dum metus oblatam prohibet temptare rapinam,
> Et coniuratos horret adire boves. [268]

The fable "The Stomach and the Other Members of the Body," points out that the parts are so dependent upon each other that if one part shirks, all are affected.

[264] Romulus I, 16.
[265] Romulus III, 17.
[266] Quintilian VI, 3, 5.
[267] Phaedrus II, 6.
[268] Avianus 18.

Sic membra et venter simul lassa intereunt.[269]

Calmness is better than anger according to the fable, "A Horseman's Wig Blown Off." In a case of misfortune or ridicule it is better for a man to laugh with the jesters than to get angry.

Ille sagax, tantis quod risus milibus esset,
Distulit ammota calliditate iocum.[270]

Kindness effects more than severity, and reason more than force. This idea is presented in the fable, "The Sun and the Wind."

Tunc victor docuit praesentia numina Titan
Nullum praemissis vincere posse minis.[271]

The following proverbs advise calmness in place of anger:

Carmina spreta exolescunt,
Si irascere agnito videntur.[272]
Iniuriarum remedium est oblivio.[273]
Paucis temeritas est bono, multi malo.[274]

It is impossible to please everybody, according to the fable, "The Man who Suddenly Became Bald." Men are always the victims of women whether they love them or are loved by them.

A feminis utcunque spoliari viros,
Ament, amentur.[275]

The Roman idea of justice is illustrated in the fable

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269 Romulus III, 16.
270 Avianus 10.
271 Avianus 4.
272 Tacitus: A. 4, 34.
273 Syrus. 250.
274 Phaedrus V, 4.
275 Phaedrus II, 2.

"The Bees and the Drones." All people who have a reputation upon the credit of other men's labors fall under the reproof of this fable. No evidence has a greater weight than fact.

> Apertum est, quis non possit, aut quis fecerit.
> Quapropter apibus fructum restituo suum. [276]

The fact that man cannot be a judge in his own case for he is always partial to himself, is brought out in the fable "The Hunter and the Lion." Boasting never leads to a decision.

> Irrita te generis subiit fiducia vestri,
> Artificis testem si cupis esse manum. [277]

It is evident from the fable, "The Twins of the Monkey," that partiality should not be shown for favoritism is not kind.

> Sic multos neglecta nivant atque oruine
> Verso spes humiles rursus in meliora refert. [278]

The following proverbs throw further light upon the Roman idea of justice.

> Justitia suum cuique distribuit.[279]
> Justitia est obtemperatio scriptis legibus. [280]
> Tros Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur. [281]

The fable of "The Stag at the Spring," advises not to judge from appearances. Those things which are despised are often of more value than those things of which one boasts. We usually prefer what is good in appearance

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276 Phaedrus III, 13.
277 Avianus 24.
278 Avianus 35.
279 Cicero: Nat. D. III, 15.
280 Cicero: Leg. 1, 15.
281 Virgil: A. 1, 574.

to what is plain and useful.

> Laudatis utiliora quae contempseris
> Saepe inveniri haec exserit narratio. [282]

Often, handsome men are very wicked, and men with an ugly face have an excellent heart. This is illustrated in the fable of "The Butcher and the Ape."

> Quando et formosos saepe inveni pessimos
> Et turpi facie multos cognovi optimos. [283]

The fable of "The Dog and the Wolf," shows how we judge the pleasures of our neighbors without considering the hardships which they endure. Good appearances blind us to attendant inconveniences.

> Fruere, quae laudas, canis,
> Reguare nolo, liber ut non sim mihi. [284]
> Quam dulcis sit libertas. [285]

It is evident from the fable of "The Cock and the Jewel," that precious things are only valuable to those who know their worth.

> Ego, qui te inveni, potior cui multo est cibus,
> Nec tibi prodesse, nec mihi quidquam potes. [286]
> Ego te invenio in hoc loco iacentem, potius mihi escam quero. [287]

Things are not always as they appear. That which cannot be gained by strength can sometimes be accomplished through cunning, according to the fable, "The Old Weasel and the Mice."

> Non semper eo sunt, quae videntur. [288]
> Ingenio quemquam facere quod viribus non potest. [289]

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282 Phaedrus I, 12.
283 Phaedrus III, 4.
284 Phaedrus III, 7.
285 Romulus III, 15.
286 Phaedrus IV, 12.
287 Romulus I, 1.
288 Phaedrus IV, 2.
289 Romulus IV, 2.

The fable of "The Rams and the Goats," teaches us not to be alarmed when men of very different hearts than our own resemble us on the exterior.

> Hoc argumentum monet, ut sustineas, tibi
> Habitu esse similes, qui sunt virtute impares. [290]

It is evident from the fable of "Demetrius and Menander" that we are not to judge a man by his outward appearance. Where there is power on one side there is flattery and slavery on the other.

> Quisnam cinaedus ille in conspectu meo
> Audet venire? Responderunt proximi:
> Hic est Menander scriptor. Mutatus statim. [291]

Obstacles are not so difficult to overcome as they may seem at first. An end can be accomplished in more than one way. This idea is brought out in the fable of "The Crow and the Pitcher."

> Quod cum videret hoc argumentum invenit. [292]

The fable "The Traveller and the Satyr," shows that appearances are deceiving; therefore, one should think well before he acts.

> Nolo ait ut nostris umquam successeret antris
> Tam diversa duo qui semel ora ferat. [293]

The fable "A Dog and a Lion," points out that that man deserves to be a slave who sacrifices his liberty to his appetite.

> Has illis epulas potius laudare memento
> Qui libertatem postposuere gulae. [294]

The fable of "The Fox and the Panther," teaches us that wisdom is worth far more than beauty.

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290 Phaedrus IV, 14.
291 Phaedrus V, 1.
292 Romulus IV, 13.
293 Avianus 29.
294 Avianus 37.

Miremurque magis quos munera mentis adornant,
Quam qui corporeis enituere bonis. [295]

The following proverbs teach that appearances are deceiving:

Acclinis falsis animus meliora recusat. [296]
Frontis nulla fides. [297]
Plerumque modestus occupat obscuri speciem,
taciturnus acerbi. [298]

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[295] Avianus 40.
[296] Horace: Sat. II, 2, 6.
[297] Juvenal 28.
[298] Horace: Ep. 1, 10, 32.

## IV. CONCLUSION.

Our study has shown that the most frequently occurring moral qualities revealed in Roman fable, proverb, and maxim are deceit, false judgement from appearances, oppression of the innocent, egotism, revenge, condemnation of the powerful and the court, blessings of mediocrity, ingratitude, greed, cowardice, and belief in Providence. It is evident also from the previous survey that certain moral ideas among the Romans were more common than others. Deceit in its various forms is one of the most frequent topics of moral teaching. In many instances we find that the deceiver is deceived and rightly so. Deceit is condemned when practiced against the innocent, but is heartily approved when used to outwit knaves and thieves. Some fables treat of deceit in a different manner, warning the credulous of the frequent triumph of deception and the consequent disasters. In many instances hypocrisy is unmasked and the folly of such a form of deception is made clear.

The condemnation of egotism forms the basis of a great many moral lessons, hence conceit must have been considered one of the worst vices. From the frequency of the warnings against it, we may also judge that it was quite prevalent. One who displays egotism through contempt for those whom he considers his inferiors, and he who is constantly boasting are equally condemned.

The fact that appearances are frequently deceiving forms the moral lesson of numerous fables, proverbs, and maxims. Man is advised to think well before he acts, to consider the inconveniences attendant upon pleasing appearances, to compare future benefits with present ones, and to remember that a

handsome face and a wicked heart often go together. A warning is directed against man's natural tendency to judge from appearances.

The Romans had good reason to stress the oppression of the innocent as a particularly contemptible crime. Under the reigns of Tiberius and Claudius, the common people had little freedom in word or deed. Informers were constantly searching for some excuse to condemn or persecute. Phaedrus himself endured punishment under this tyrannical oppression. The people are warned against alliances of any kind with the rich and powerful, for ambition and greed have no consideration for justice.

Condemnation of the powerful and the court appears frequently as a moral teaching. A probable cause of this attack were the sufferings of the common people under the tyrannical rule of the emperors. Rulers are warned that cruelty in youth provides only contempt in old age. The warning is also given that the quarrels of the great affect the humble. However, a change of government under these conditions is not advised, for it would mean only a change of masters. It is best to endure present persecutions lest worse ones come.

Revenge is frequently used as a topic of moral instruction. The Romans advise not to do to another what you do not wish to be done to yourself. They approve of avenging the offender in a like manner. The powerful are warned not to overlook the humble, for revenge is easy for quick-witted people, however low their station. The prevalence of revenge is brought out in the belief that anyone offended will seek to avenge himself. However, in obtaining revenge, people are advised first to consider their own strength; and then to act accordingly.

Condemnation of ingratitude is the moral idea contained in

many fables. The good are warned to have no dealings with the wicked or the greedy for the latter have no sense of gratitude. Those whom we have helped the most often become our worst enemies.

One of the most outstanding beliefs set forth in Roman fables and proverbs is the idea that happiness lies in mediocrity. This was probably due to the fact that informers were constantly spying upon the rich in order to get their property, and consequently, the rich lived in fear of losing their wealth. When a great danger approaches a state, the obscurity of the common people is their greatest protection. Then too, poverty secures a man from thieves and robbers.

Frequent warnings are found against the perils of greed, showing that a man wastes what he has in order to get what he has not. The chief cause of greed seems to be the desire of the humble to appear as the rich. Contentment is set forth as one of the foremost virtues.

Cowardice is one of the worst of vices according to Roman beliefs. In times of danger each man must look out for himself and not depend upon the courage of his neighbors. However, when cowardice does threaten, one should remember that there is always someone whose lot is worse than his own.

Belief in the power of Providence forms the moral basis of several fables and proverbs. Providence is constantly guarding the welfare of the good, and yet it assists no one who does not help himself. People are condemned for ascribing all their good fortune to themselves and blaming their bad fortune upon Providence.

While the moral traits mentioned above are those most frequently indicated among the Romans, many others, dealing with obedience,

friendship, foolish advice, gossip, sincerity, independence, industry, perseverance, caution, unity, anger, and justice are occasionally set forth.

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